

# CHIMNEY MAINTENANCE FOR WOOD BURNING APPLIANCES

Each year chimneys account for a significant number of residential structure fires in Washington State. In past years chimney fires have accounted for 12% of all structural fires.

The Chimney Safety Institute of America reports that creosote accumulation is the leading cause of chimney fires. A chimney that is dirty, blocked or is in disrepair can inhibit proper venting of smoke up the flue and can also cause a chimney fire. Nearly all-residential fires originating in the chimney are preventable. An annual chimney inspection by a certified chimney sweep can prevent fire or carbon monoxide poisoning.

The Chimney Safety Institute of America recommends the following chimney safety tips:

- Have your chimney checked every year.
- Burn only well-seasoned hardwoods.
- Install a chimney cap.
- Install a carbon monoxide detector.
- Have your chimney waterproofed.
- Have your chimney flashing inspected and maintained.
- Have a sealing damper installed in your wood-burning system.
- Have your chimney sweep ensure that your chimney has an appropriate liner.
- Following a violent storm, earthquake, flood or lightening strike, have your chimney inspected for damage—inside and out.
- Hire a certified chimney sweep.

